

VZCZCXRO6344
OO RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHMO #5749/01 3411256
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 071256Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5744
INFO RUCNCFE/CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE COLLECTIVE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHXD/MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 005749

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [OSCE](#) [MARR](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: CFE: THE DAY AFTER

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns. Reason 1.4(b), (d)

11. (C) Summary. On December 12, Russia will suspend participation in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, ceasing notification, inspections, and permissions for inspection under the Treaty, and not participating in the December 15 annual exchange of information. Officials have said Russia will not immediately change its force posture, although a small number of forces could be moved south to deal with unrest in Dagestan and Ingushetia. According to officials, additional actions will depend on responses by the West. The GOR plans to continue negotiations to resolve outstanding issues, but sees a deadlock on the flank regime. If there is agreement on a package solution that addresses all outstanding issues, Russia would be prepared to lift its suspension prior to ratification of A/CFE by all States. The MFA denies defense experts' claims that the CFE Treaty is not very important to Russia. The GOR is ready to meet before the 12th, but MFA Director Antonov will not be in Brussels for the NATO Ministerial. Embassy Moscow recommends that the U.S. public response to Russia's treaty suspension should be done in concert with key European Allies, stressing that U.S. continues to observe its CFE commitments and is open to further dialogue with Russia. End summary.

Russian Actions after December 12

13. (C) On November 30, Putin signed the decree providing for suspension of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, to take effect at midnight December 12 (contrary to the statement from the Presidential Administration that the suspension would take effect at midnight between December 12 and 13, the MFA told us it will take effect at midnight between December 11 and December 12). The law allows Putin to rescind the decision to suspend without going back to the Duma, but we do not anticipate he will do so.

14. (C) On December 5, MFA Counselor Sergey Federyakov confirmed that starting on the 12th, Russia would cease all inspections, permissions for inspections, notifications and exchange of information, as required by the Treaty. Russia would not make the December 15 annual information exchange. He noted that Russia was considering continuing participation in the Joint Consultative Group, as it was a useful forum for discussion, but needed to work out the legalities of such participation.

15. (C) Federyakov also confirmed press statements by CHOD Baluyevskiy that Russia did not intend to change its force posture following suspension, although the GOR might move a few troops to the south to deal with unrest in Dagestan and

Ingushetia. He added that Russia would adhere to its 1999 political commitments regarding stationing of forces in Kaliningrad and Leningrad oblasts, provided the Baltics did not significantly increase their military presence. He said that Russia just wanted the freedom to deploy troops anywhere on its territory, even though actual deployment would likely stay the same.

Progress on Some Issues...

16. (C) Federyakov told us that the GOR believed considerable progress had been made on some major issues at the Madrid meeting between A/S Fried and Director Antonov (ref B), but there were still key issues unresolved, and the progress was not sufficient for Putin to decide not to suspend the Treaty.

17. (C) Federyakov said the GOR believed we were heading in the right direction on the issues relating to ratification by Allies, provisional application of the A/CFE, accession discussions with the Baltics and Slovenia, and definition of substantial combat forces, and that these issues were resolvable.

But Flank, Collective Ceilings Still Unresolved

18. (C) The flank regime, however, was still deadlocked. Federyakov said Russia was the only country that did not have the right to put its forces wherever it wants on its territory, and this "really irritates Putin." Russia also viewed the issue of collective ceilings for NATO forces as a problem. He said Russia could change the language but needed

MOSCOW 00005749 002 OF 003

to keep the essence of the idea - that reductions of Treaty-Limited Equipment for all of the NATO countries would be one level.

Georgia and Moldova Still Problems

19. (C) In response to our concerns about the GOR walking back progress on Georgia and Moldova, Federyakov denied that the GOR had changed its positions. He said Russia felt it was essential to have some evidence of Georgian acceptance of Russian peacekeepers at Gadauta. Russia's preference was for a documentary authorization of the presence, but he did not rule out some other form of acknowledgment. He noted that the GOR was awaiting the results of A/S Fried's discussions with the Georgians, and expected a new proposal.

110. (C) Federyakov said the GOR was working on its counterproposal on Moldova and hoped to have it done before the 12th. The GOR did not want to link a settlement of the Transnistria issue to CFE. The mandate for the observer mission should focus only on CFE-related matters, not on the broader conflict in Transnistria. The mandate should include periodic visits by the civilian observers to Kolbasna, monitoring of activities of the peacekeepers, and contacts with Russian and Moldovan troops. He stressed we should focus on the functions of the mission first, and discuss numbers of monitors later.

"Let's Keep Talking"

111. (C) Federyakov reiterated Lavrov's public comments that suspension of the Treaty "would not be a tragedy," and the GOR wanted to continue discussions after the 12th. He claimed Russia had made significant concessions by agreeing to talk about Georgia and Moldova (while reiterating that the issues were not linked to A/CFE), and by replacing its previous insistence that the Baltics and Slovenia join the original Treaty with acceptance of their joining only the Adapted Treaty. He repeated recent statements in the press

by Putin and Lavrov that the original Treaty was hopelessly out of date and did not reflect reality.

Deal Needed to Lift Suspension

¶12. (C) In a December 3 press conference, Putin said "If our partners do ratify these (CFE) agreements and begin to implement them, then we are not ruling out the possibility that we also come back to them. I would like to emphasize once again that we are not going to wait forever." Clarifying this, Federyakov said Allied ratification of the A/CFE was not the key to lifting the suspension. If the U.S. (including Allied State parties) and Russia could reach agreement on a "package solution" that resolved all of the issues, the suspension could be lifted, even if Allies had not yet ratified the A/CFE Treaty. He stressed that the package had to include all the issues; Russia could not agree to include some and forget the rest.

CFE Treaty Important to Russia

¶13. (C) We noted to Federyakov that several defense experts had told us the CFE Treaty was not really important to Russia. The GOR saw it as a political tool and a means of garnering political support during an election year. The experts argued that CFE was about transparency and confidence-building measures, and Russia believed it had not worked. Russia still saw the U.S. and the West as adversaries. Federyakov denied that the A/CFE Treaty was not important to Russia, saying Moscow believed strongly that there needed to be a treaty on conventional forces in Europe. Federyakov confirmed that the GOR was prepared to meet again prior to the December 12 suspension, but that MFA Disarmament Director Antonov would not be at the NATO Ministerial.

¶14. (C) Embassy Moscow recommends that the U.S. should greet Russia's suspension publicly, reaffirming our adherence to the Treaty, and our readiness to continue dialogue with the Russians. To the extent possible, our public message should be coordinated with key European Allies, who hopefully will deliver the same message. Publicly and privately, the Russians need to hear the U.S. and its Allies speak with one

MOSCOW 00005749 003 OF 003

voice on Russia's unilateral decision to suspend its observance of the Treaty.
BURNS